

Pastor Fisher Update 39

Dear Church Family,

I have inadvertently missed an important name in the list of seniors at Covenant from our church. Barutpat Jiradecharkorn, better known to many of us as "BP," is also graduating. Hopefully, he too will be able to participate in August, but he is going home to Thailand for the summer.

Our brother's testimony is a joyful one and he made the effort, at his own expense, to return to the US to finish his work at Covenant and, Lord willing, he will return in the fall and enter TCC. I have enjoyed having him in Sunday School and we congratulate him on his hard work and graduation.

When I was a young boy, my parents bought a home with a great feature. It was a south-facing, glass-enclosed, potting shed attached to the house and entered from the basement.

This room became the perfect place for the menagerie that my brother and I created. This room housed turtles, frogs, toads, fish and snakes. We would catch these creatures and then bring them home to our sun-filled fortress where we would feed and watch them.

At one point my father, who worked for Campbell Soup Company, brought home a large industrial soup kettle, and fixed it up so we could keep fish in it. This was outside, but we considered it the aquatic annex to our indoor zoo. My brother, older than me and more experienced, brought home large carp to fill the giant aquarium; I brought home assorted frogs, sunnies and small perch.

For snake hunting, we usually had a forked stick on hand, but we often just reached down and grabbed them by the back of the neck. For a little kid it was an adrenaline-pumping activity.

One day I was surveying a stream that was careening through a rocky section. I saw, among the rocks, a snake slither from one sheltered place to another among the stones. I dropped on my stomach and waited for him to make his next move. He stuck his head out and I quickly reached in the water and pinned his head down at the neck. I had no stick because I was not particularly looking for snakes that day.

There I was, awkwardly stretched out on the ground with my arm elbow deep in the stream with a snake pinned down. I asked another boy passing by if he could find me a forked stick. He was older and asked me what I caught. I told him that I was unsure, but it was a snake.

He got down next to me and examined the snake. It took a little effort because the speed of the water passing among the rocks distorted our view a little. After a moment, he sat upright and announced that I pinned, with my bare hand, to the sandy bottom of the stream, one of the most poisonous water snakes of our region in the East.

I was, as you might imagine, in a dilemma. There was no way that I could let go and get my hand and arm away quickly enough if he decided to strike. This was made even harder because of the awkward position I was in on the ground and among the boulders.

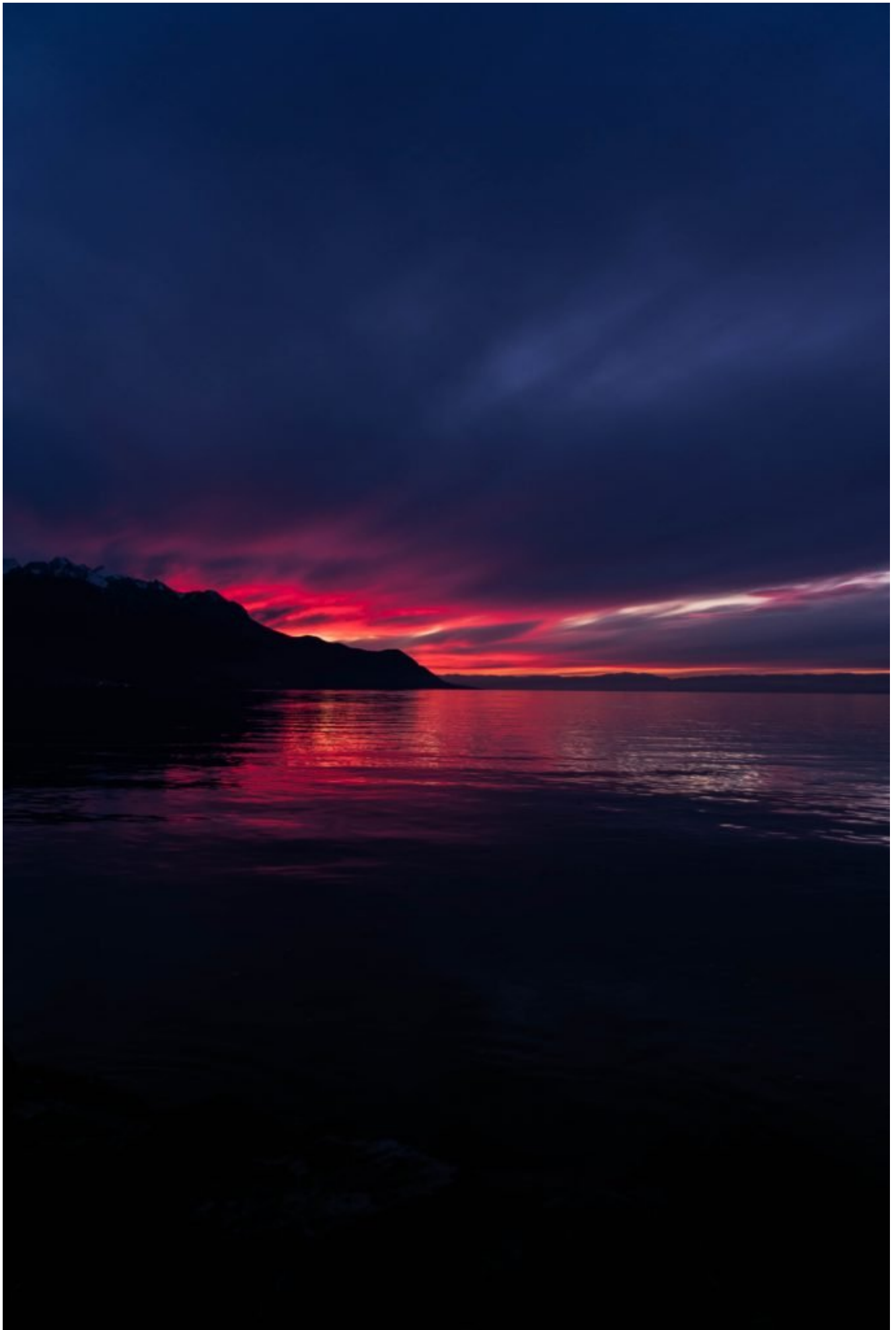
My new friend found a forked stick and handed it to me and moved on—being an older boy, he did not have time or interest in whether I survived or not. I picked up the stick with my free hand and clinging to the bank with the rest of me, I jammed the fork of the stick into the sand just behind his head.

After making sure he was securely pinned, I let go of him with my hand, got up on my knees and removed the stick and he quickly swam away. Needless to say, he did not find his place in the menagerie.

We have a serpent who is at large in the world, who is dangerous, and whose poison is lethal. If we were trying in our own strength to keep him subdued, it would be frightening and even hopeless. He is stronger and more clever than we could ever hope to be. He has a host of servants who are ready and willing to do his will, and he has been at his business since before the fall of mankind. He takes advantage of every situation to destroy and tear down, and our present circumstance is no exception. He is opposed to all righteousness, and is the father of lies and a murderer from the beginning.

But there is a fork at his neck that he cannot escape. It is held by the Son of God, and in the end He will finally crush the serpent's head—it is inevitable. He was utterly ruined at the cross, and when the work of Christ on earth is done He will be cast into the "lake of fire and brimstone," and be "tormented day and night for ever and ever."

1 John 3:8 *He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.*



The following hymn can be sung to the tune of the Doxology.

He lives, the great Redeemer lives,

What joy the blest assurance gives

And now, before His Father, God,

Pleads the full merit of His blood.

In ev'ry dark, distressful hour,

When sin and Satan join their power,

Let this dear hope repel the dart,

That Jesus bears us on His heart.

Great Advocate, almighty Friend

On Him our humble hopes depend:

Our cause can never, never fail,

For Jesus pleads, and must prevail.

—Anne Steele, 1760